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SCALE OF ASSESSMENTS FOR THE APPORTIONMENT OF THE EXPENSES OF THE UNITED NATIONS

Letter dated 28 October 1994 from the Permanent Representative of Iraq to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

You undoubtedly realize that the conditions of the comprehensive embargo imposed by Security Council resolutions have deprived Iraq of all its financial resources and have paralysed its capacity to meet even the minimum essential humanitarian needs of its people as regards foodstuffs and medicaments. These same conditions have also caused Iraq's non-fulfilment of its financial commitments with regard to the United Nations and many regional and international organizations.

Iraq owes the United Nations its assessed contributions for 1993 and 1994, which represent its share of the United Nations regular budget for those two years.

Realizing the difficulty of the financial situation through which the United Nations is passing and wishing to meet its commitments to the Organization, Iraq has proposed, in letters addressed by the Minister for Foreign Affairs to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and in letters addressed by the Permanent Representative of Iraq to the United Nations to the Controller, that it be permitted to pay its contribution in local currency to the United Nations agencies operating in Iraq, as was done until 1992, or that $300,000 in Iraqi frozen funds be unblocked in order to meet a portion of those commitments.

These two Iraqi proposals were rejected on the grounds that the United Nations agencies operating in Iraq had no need for local currency and that resolution 778 (1992) provides that frozen funds can be unblocked only for humanitarian purposes.

Faced with such a situation, my country, in spite of its repeated attempts to meet its financial commitments, finds itself on the point of coming under Article 19 of the United Nations Charter, which provides that any Member the amount of whose arrears equals or exceeds the amount of the contributions due from it for the preceding two full years, shall be deprived of its vote in the General Assembly.

Iraq, which is an original Member of the United Nations, has never been in arrears in its commitments to the United Nations, and what now prevents it from paying its contribution to the United Nations budget is the same factor that has deprived it of its financial resources and prevented it from supplying food and medicine to its people, namely, a reason that is beyond its control and which was imposed by Security Council resolutions.

The provisions of the Charter, in particular Article 19, provide that the General Assembly may permit a Member that is unable to pay to vote, if it is satisfied that the failure to pay is due to conditions beyond the control of the Member.

I am fully convinced that your awareness that the harsh conditions endured by the people of Iraq under the pressure of the embargo that has lasted for more than four years are the result of overwhelming circumstances beyond its control which have prevented it from supplying the most elementary human needs and which now threaten to deprive it of its vote in the international forum of which Iraq is an original Member.

I hope that you will be able to apply the provisions of Article 19 of the United Nations Charter by considering that Iraq's non-payment of its contribution is due to the reasons set forth in this letter, which are beyond my country's control.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter circulated as a document of the General Assembly under agenda item 112.

(Signed) Nizar HAMDOON
Ambassador
Permanent Representative